Madison County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan Meeting Notes
February 19, 2009, 7:00-8:00 p.m. in Virginia City, Montana

Attendees:

▪ Jon Agner	US Forest Service, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Madison Ranger District
▪ John Bancroft	Ennis Town Commission
▪ Brad Bradshaw	Ennis Ambulance
	Madison Valley Rural Fire Department
▪ Janine Clavadetscher	Madison Valley Medical Center
▪ Jim Clavadetscher	Madison Valley Medical Center
	Madison County Incident Management Team
▪ Don Copple	Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
▪ Daisy Ferreras	Virginia City Clerk/Treasurer
▪ Janet Fortner	Madison County 911 Communications
	Madison County Incident Management Team
▪ Judith Heintz	US Forest Service, Interagency Dispatch Center
▪ Thomas Hyndman	Twin Bridges Mayor
	Twin Bridges Volunteer Fire Department
▪ Toni James	Virginia City Rural Fire Department
	Madison County Community Emergency Response Team
▪ Jim Jarvis	Madison County Planner
▪ Julie Johnson	Montana Heritage Commission
▪ Theodore Liss	Madison Valley Rural Fire District
▪ Sheri Luksha	Madison County Community Emergency Response Team
	Ruby Valley Search and Rescue
	American Red Cross
▪ Thomas Luksha	Ruby Valley Ambulance Service
	Madison County Incident Management Team
	Madison County Search and Rescue
▪ Tom Luksha	Madison County Sheriff's Office Chaplain
	Ruby Valley Search and Rescue
	Madison County Community Emergency Response Team
▪ Scott McClintic	Madison Valley Rural Fire District
▪ Diane McPhetres	Ennis Town Commission
▪ Jenifer McPhetres	Ennis Town Commission
▪ Judy Melin	Madison Valley Manor
▪ Christopher Mumme	Madison County Disaster and Emergency Services
▪ Scott Newell	Town of Ennis Police Department
▪ Steve Orr	Madison Valley Rural Fire District
	Virginia City Rural Fire District
	Madison County Sheriff's Office
	Madison County Search and Rescue
	Madison County Incident Management Team
▪ Tom Roerick	US Forest Service, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Madison Ranger District
▪ David Schenk	Madison County Sheriff
	Madison County Coroner
	Madison County Fire Warden
	Madison County Search and Rescue
▪ Ben Schott	National Weather Service
▪ Pam Shrauger	Big Sky Hazard Management LLC
▪ Dale Smail	Alder Fire Department
▪ Jill Steeley	Madison County Public Health
	Madison County Community Emergency Response Team

	Madison County Incident Management Team
▪ Melinda Tichenor	Madison Valley Medical Center
	Madison County Community Emergency Response Team
	Madison County Citizen Corps Council
▪ Steve Weddle	Madison County Road Crew, District #1
▪ Jane Yecny	Ruby Valley Ambulance Service
	Madison County Search and Rescue, Ruby Unit
	Madison County Community Emergency Response Team
	American Red Cross
▪ Ken Yecny	Ruby Valley Ambulance Service
	Madison County Search and Rescue, Ruby Unit

Introduction:

What is mitigation?
Hazard mitigation prevents a potentially hazardous event from developing into a disaster or reduces the losses incurred when a disaster does occur. Mitigation focuses on long-term, sustainable measures that reduce or eliminate the risk to the community. Examples of mitigation include building codes, flood-smart construction practices, defensible wildfire space around structures, living snow fences, earthquake tie downs, and tornado safe rooms. Note that mitigation is different in many respects from the other phases of emergency management: preparedness, response, and recovery. Mitigation is not about getting the community ready to respond to a disaster, rather taking the steps to reduce the impacts.

Why mitigate?
Mitigation is an investment. Studies have shown that for every dollar spent on mitigation activities, four dollars are saved in disaster losses, plus countless lives have probably been saved. For example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimates that the rigorous building standards adopted by 20,000 communities across the country are saving the nation more than $1.1 billion per year in prevented flood damages.

Why plan for mitigation?
Disasters, especially in Montana, don't come along all that frequently, however, when they do, they can cause significant damages disrupting our way of life and economy. By conducting a complete, all-hazard risk assessment, we can objectively analyze what potential losses we could incur in the future and develop a strategy for reducing such losses. Often, financial assistance for mitigation in the form of federal grants is available following a disaster, but if the community is too busy focusing on the disaster recovery, valuable mitigation opportunities can be lost. By planning, we set up our communities with effective ways to use mitigation funding following a disaster, plus each year, disaster or not, competitive grant funding is available nationally for mitigation projects. Growth and development also provide important mitigation opportunities. By taking the steps necessary to mitigate losses to future development, such as subdivision regulations, building code adoption, zoning, etc., our communities can be better prepared for future growth by protecting citizens before they live in harm's way. Considering mitigation before construction begins can save taxpayers' money since mitigation often costs more after construction is completed than during the planning phase.

Discussion Items:

1. Hazards included in the 2004 plan were:
    - Earthquakes
    - Hazardous Materials
    - Bio-Terrorism / Epidemiology
    - Wildfire
    - Flooding

    Should we make any changes?

- Change the Bio-Terrorism / Epidemiology hazard to Communicable Disease (including human, animal, and plant diseases)
- Add a Drought hazard
- Add a Landslide and Avalanche hazard
- Add a Severe Thunderstorms and Strong Winds hazard (including tornadoes, hail, downbursts, lightning, and strong wind)
- Add a Structure Collapse hazard
- Add a Terrorism and Civil Unrest hazard
- Add a Transportation Accident hazard
- Add a Volcano hazard
- Add a Winter Weather hazard (including blizzards, winter storms, heavy snow, ice storms, and extreme cold)
- Include upwind nuclear power plants in the Hazardous Material Release hazard

2. Has any development occurred in Madison County since 2004? If so, where? Has any of this development occurred in a location or way that makes it more vulnerable to any of the identified hazards? Do you have development concerns?

   Quite a bit of development has occurred in Madison County over the past five years. Concerns include:
   - Wildfire concerns for development in the wildland urban interface and near the national forest lands
   - Flood concerns for development in the lower Ruby Valley
   - Avalanche, landslide, and flash flood concerns for development on hillsides
   - Remoteness of new development makes emergency response difficult
   - The county lacks the people and infrastructure resources to keep up with the new development

3. Mitigation strategies in the 2004 plan were: (specific mitigation activities are underlined for easier reading; projects marked with an asterisk are considered preparedness, response, or recovery activities and are generally not considered mitigation.)

Goal 1: Have someone designated to provide leadership and coordination for disaster mitigation efforts and response in Madison County, and monitor progress of mitigation efforts. Institute a more proactive Disaster and Emergency Services Program.

Objective 1.1: Make Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator a <u>full-time position</u> by July 1, 2004.

Goal 2: Reduce loss of life, injuries, and property damage in the event of an earthquake.

Objective 2.1: Educate the populace of proactive measures regarding earthquake safety.
- Action 2.1.1: Produce <u>earthquake educational brochures</u> to be distributed by the Madison County Sanitarian, the Madison County Planner, Town Halls, Realtors, etc.
- Action 2.1.2: Continued <u>geologic review of proposed subdivisions</u>.
- Action 2.1.3: Initiate <u>geologic review of existing subdivisions</u> for educational purposes.
- Action 2.1.4: <u>Educate new home builders</u> as to seismic building standards and earthquake fault locations.

Objective 2.2: Educate the public sector as to earthquake mitigation measures.
- Action 2.2.1: Assist in updating earthquake plans for public entities.*
- Action 2.2.2: Assist in identifying and make recommendations in <u>retrofitting unsafe public buildings</u> with mitigation efforts.
- Action 2.2.5: Make improvements identified to <u>bring infrastructure up to seismic code</u>. (Actions 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 are incorporated into Action 2.2.5.)
- Action 2.2.6: Ensure all <u>future infrastructure is earthquake resistant</u> and built to seismic code.

Goal 3: Reduce loss of life and prevent injury in the event of a hazardous material incident.

Objective 3.1: Undertake a program of public education and awareness of hazardous materials.

- Action 3.1.1: Determine type and amount of hazardous materials moving through Madison County.
- Action 3.1.2: Develop, produce, and distribute hazardous material educational publications.
- Action 3.1.3: Develop an early warning system to alert affected populations of a hazardous material incident.

*Objective 3.2: Train emergency response personnel for hazardous material response.**
Objective 3.3: Lessen exposure to hazardous materials incident.

- Action 3.3.1: Reroute hazardous material traffic out of Madison County.

Goal 4: Sustain economic viability in the event of a hazardous material incident.

*Objective 4.1: Develop and implement procedure for timely recovery.**
*Objective 4.2: Foster interagency cooperation to ensure effective implementation of hazardous material mitigation and response efforts.**

Goal 5: Expedite environmental recovery in the event of a hazardous material incident.

*Objective 5.1: Ensure that procedures are in place for a quick response to and a timely clean up of a hazardous material incident.**

Goal 6: Develop public health capacity to identify and respond to a bio-terrorism event.

Objective 6.1: Hire a full-time Public Health Officer.
Objective 6.2: Implement active surveillance system.

- Action 6.2.1: Develop database of providers with ability to track weekly reports.
- Action 6.2.2: Educate providers on tracking and reporting signs and symptoms of biological agents.
- Action 6.2.3: Assure functionality of Health Alert Network.
- Action 6.2.4: Develop MOU's with health care providers and institutions.

*Objective 6.3: Coordinate an effective response system through improved communications.**

Goal 7: Reduce or prevent loss of life and injuries and property damage in the event of flooding.

Objective 7.1: Conduct a floodplain (100-year flood) mapping project for Madison County consistent with FEMA mapping protocol.
Objective 7.2: Using floodplain maps, maps of current conditions, and all available historical information, identify and assess targets at risk including dams.
Objective 7.3: Identify possible hazard mitigation efforts for targets at risk including floodplain buyouts, floodplain conservation easements, zoning to limit building and rebuilding in high-hazard areas, acquisition and/or relocation, and hardening, strengthening, or elevating structures at risk. (Objective 7.4 is incorporated into Objective 7.3.)
Objective 7.5: Educate the public to the flood hazard and to potential mitigation strategies.

Goal 8: Wildfire mitigation goals are discussed in Appendix 1 (Wildfire Plan).

Should we make any changes to the mitigation strategies?

- Emphasize the importance of education and collaboration across jurisdictions and disciplines. Possible education activities include:
  - Educate the public on preparing 72-Hour Preparedness Kits
  - Educate the public on the purchase and use of NOAA Weather Radios
  - Educate the public on Firewise Practices
  - Educate Town Employees in Mitigation and Response Practices and Resources
  - Educate parents on school incident protocols
  - Educate the public on evacuation protocols
  - Educate the public on the various plans in place at the state and local levels
- Add a project for installing a NOAA Weather Radio repeater in the Lower Madison Valley.
- Add a National Weather Service Storm Ready Program project.

- List wildfire projects from the wildfire plan and include firewise programs, fuels treatments, structure locations in WUI, and ingress/egress.
- Add an electric infrastructure protection project.
- Add a snow fence project.
- Remove Action 3.3.1 as it is not a viable option on federal highways, but add a project related to more passing lanes.
- Modify Objective 1.1 to reflect continuing to support the full-time DES position and the deputy DES position.
- Add a project, such as a simple permit system, that allows the county to interact with and educate landowners when new development occurs. Another option is to create a packet that can be distributed with septic permits.

4. What mitigation work has been done in Madison County, Ennis, Sheridan, Twin Bridges, and Virginia City since 2004?

   - Reverse 911 operational
   - DES position is now a full-time position
   - Phone trees have been created for severe weather
   - Work has been done with the ranch lands group regarding living with wildfire
   - Response procedures have been outlined in the Disaster and Emergency plan, Earthquake Annex, including self-mobilization
   - Dispatch broadcasts severe weather warnings to emergency responders
   - A new emergency website was been established
   - The US Forest Service has done numerous fuels reduction and mitigation projects for wildfire
   - Hospital staff has been trained in reading hazardous material placards.

5. Has the existing mitigation plan been used? Was it integrated into other planning mechanisms, land use regulations, or documents? If so, how? If not, what would make it more useful?

   - The US Forest Service, Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Madison Ranger District uses the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (a related element of the PDM plan) to prioritize their fuel treatments.
   - The plan has been used when preparing Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant applications related to historic preservation.
   - The plan has been incorporated into the county growth policy and subdivision regulations.

6. What tools or regulations do the jurisdictions use to mitigate the risk to development (i.e. building codes, subdivision regulations, zoning, etc.)?

   - Subdivision regulations, primarily
   - Developers are usually educated during the subdivision process